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Report of the N.C. State
Hospital Commission

1908

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REPORT OF STATE HOSPITAL COMMISSION.

Raleigh, N. C., December 29, 1908.

His Excellency, Hon. R. B. Glenn,

Governor of North Carolina, Raleigh, N. C.

Sir:—The State Hospital Commission, which you appointed under and by virtue of chapter 191 of the Public Laws of 1907, herewith respectfully renders you a detailed statement of what it has done, and the amount of money expended from the date of its appointment to the close of the present fiscal year, to-wit, December 30, 1908.

The main object of the act creating this commission was, as we understand it, to provide for additional accommodations for all white and colored insane, all epileptics, and all other mental defectives, and, incidentally, to make only such repairs to the several institutions as the commission deemed absolutely necessary. In order that the commission might intelligently proceed upon the work before it, our first task was that each member should thoroughly inform himself as to the condition of the several institutions, and of the number of unfortunates in the State who require its care and protection.

Accordingly, we visited the hospitals at Raleigh, Morganton and Goldsboro, and made a thorough inspection of those institutions, ascertaining the needed repairs at each place, the absolute necessity for more land at each, and the strong and pressing demand from every section of the State for admittance into the several hospitals of unfortunate insane and epileptics who were confined in the county jails and county homes, we immediately realized that the progress of the commission would not be as rapid as we had hoped, on account of the appropriation for these purposes being limited to $125,000 per year.

Being hampered in this way, we have done the best we could as we saw it, and we trust the people of the State fully understand why more has not been accomplished.

When the commission was organized, we ascertained that the State had an option on what was known as the Grimes land, a tract of 1,137 acres, which adjoins the Hospital at Raleigh,

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for the sum of $53,500. This option would expire in a few days, and, therefore, this important matter first demanded our attention. We found that the Joint Committee on Insane Asylums for the General Assembly of 1907 had recommended to the General Assembly the purchase of this land. Your Excellency had also recommended it in your message to that session of the General Assembly, and, upon our failure to secure an extension of this option, the commission, after a thorough inspection of the land, decided, with the approval of the Governor and the Council of State, to purchase the same, which we did, and for which we paid $53,500, and for which the State now has a good deed, duly executed and recorded.

The commission did not think, at the time of this purchase, that the State at present actually needs all of this land, and, as the owners would not sell a part of the same, we thought it best to buy all of it, and we feel that the land is well worth the money, and that we could to-day sell it for considerably more than we paid for it.

The commission discovered, soon after its organization, that the Hospital at Raleigh was, in a great many respects, inferior, especially in buildings, sanitation and equipment, to the Hospital at Morganton. The Raleigh buildings are much older, and have been in use for many years. The plumbing, toilet rooms and closets in many instances were old and out of date. We found that the Morganton Hospital had superior and more modern buildings, better equipment, better outbuildings, a better laundry, better boilers, a better and more modern system of dining rooms, more and better land, and better and more beautiful grounds, and that it cared for about twice as many patients.

On these and perhaps other accounts the commission readily concluded that there has justly grown up in the State a feeling that the Morganton institution is superior, from many standpoints, to the Raleigh institution. Accordingly, we adopted the policy of trying to place the two institutions on an equality, if possible, not only as to accommodations for about the same number of patients, but also as to equipment, furniture, etc. We believe this the correct policy, for we think it unjust that either of these institutions should be considered better than the

other. They both belong to the State, and each should be equally esteemed and regarded by the people of the State.

For the Hospital at Raleigh we have erected and furnished and turned over to the directors an annex, which will accommodate one hundred men. This building is a modern, fireproof structure, is comfortably furnished and equipped, and is, in our opinion, a credit to the State. It, with furniture, fixtures, etc., cost, approximately, $70,000, and is now being filled by insane men from both the eastern and western districts.

We are now erecting a new building at Raleigh which will accommodate one hundred convalescent women, and are also erecting there a group of three buildings, on the colony plan, for one hundred convalescent men.

The commission, after careful deliberation, decided for the present to locate the buildings for all white epileptics also at Raleigh. Some of the members of the commission, however, were decidedly of the opinion that the epileptic buildings should be on land in a different locality and under an entirely different management, but we are now erecting there a group of three buildings for one hundred epileptic men, and another group of three buildings for one hundred epileptic women. We are, therefore, erecting at the present time at Raleigh ten buildings, the contract price for which, exclusive of plumbing, heating and furniture, is $66,539. When these buildings are completed we will have provided room at Raleigh for five hundred additional patients.

We have also decided to provide a system of associated dining rooms at Raleigh, and to install there new bathrooms and toilet rooms, which will give room in the present buildings for about seventy-five additional patients.

We have also erected a new storeroom at Raleigh, and also a carpenter shop there.

We have appropriated for the Hospital at Raleigh $198,456.-76. This amount covers what has been paid out, as well as the amount which will be due on uncompleted contracts, and will pay for the eleven buildings and the land at Raleigh, but will not furnish the ten buildings under construction. A detailed statement of the appropriations for the Hospital at Raleigh is hereto attached, marked Exhibit A.

We found the buildings at Morganton in good condition, and little was requested there in the way of repairs. We found it necessary to purchase 154 acres of land adjoining that institution, to be used for farming purposes. This land cost us $5,000. An addition to the laundry was provided; eight tenement houses were erected for employees at the Hospital.

We have erected at Morganton a building known as the nurses' home. In this building all female attendants will be quartered. This building, with furniture and equipment, cost, approximately, $25,000. This building enables the Hospital to provide for one hundred and two additional female patients.

We have also authorized the erection of three buildings on the colony plan at Morganton to accommodate one hundred men, to cost, with equipment and furniture, about $30,000. Plans and specifications have been adopted, and these buildings will be erected with the greatest possible dispatch.

In this connection we desire to say that we have granted every request made of us by the directors of the Hospital at Morganton. We have done this just as soon as our appropriations were adequate for this purpose, after making provision for other buildings and improvements which we thought to be more urgent and pressing.

A detailed statement of the appropriations for the Hospital at Morganton is attached and marked Exhibit B.

The commission found a bad state of affairs at the Hospital at Goldsboro. The engines were worn and almost unfit for use; there was inadequate fire protection, one boiler was practically burnt out; the water supply was foul and not healthy, the water-closets were unsanitary; the lighting plant was in very bad condition; the ice plant and cold-storage room needed repairing; there was a lack of farming tools and equipments; there was not sufficient room for the employees, and the institution needed additional land. This gives a fair idea of the conditions there, and it was difficult for the commission to understand how the officers of that institution had managed to get along at all, or to conduct it with any sort of success.

We have remedied these troubles, and the institution now has a respectable equipment.

We are now erecting at Goldsboro four buildings, two for consumptives and two for epileptics. These buildings, when completed, will make room in the present buildings for eighty-four patients, and will cost, exclusive of equipment, $23,650.

A detailed statement of the appropriations for this institution is attached and marked Exhibit C.

RECAPITULATION.

From the above it will be observed that when the buildings and improvements now under construction are completed, we will have provided for 575 additional patients at Raleigh, which will double the present capacity of that institution. We will have provided for 102 additional female patients at Morganton and also 100 males at Morganton, and eighty-four new patients at Goldsboro, a grand total of 861.

The commission has begun, as herein stated, the erection of buildings at Raleigh to provide for all that class of white epileptics known as insane epileptics, some of whom are now in the Hospitals at Raleigh and Morganton, many more being in the county homes and jails. It contemplates the erection, in the near future, of additional buildings for that other grade of epileptics (not insane now), and for those unfortunates called mental defectives, who are not admitted to the Hospitals, but are in county homes and private families.

We think that all epileptics and all mental defectives should be under one management, and to this end we recommend to the General Assembly through you the enactment of such a law as will require these classes of unfortunates to be provided for at the same place.

The commission is also of the opinion that all tubercular white insane should be cared for at the same place, and, as we have provided for epileptics, as stated above, at Raleigh, we are of the opinion that it would be reasonably fair and just and economical that the tubercular insane should be cared for at Morganton, not only for climatic reasons, but for the further reason that a special care and treatment is required for this form of disease, and we do not think it economical to maintain two separate places for this purpose.

Your commission desires to make one other recommendation to the General Assembly through you, and we beg of you that you will give it careful consideration.

There is more or less rivalry between the Hospital at Raleigh and the Hospital at Morganton. There is a feeling in the State that the Morganton institution is better in every respect than the Raleigh institution. It is a well-known fact that the Morganton buildings and management, owing to a continuous management over a long period of years, is recognized as the better institution of the two. This commission has determined, as far as is in its power, to place the two institutions on an equality as to buildings and equipments, and to dissipate, if possible, the idea that either institution is better than the other.

In our judgment, the most effective way to bring about this condition of public sentiment is to have one Board of Directors for the State, who shall have in charge and control all three of the State Hospitals. This board should be composed, in our opinion, of one member from each congressional district. It should be required to meet often, and to diligently supervise each. It should buy all of a certain kind of supplies for each institution, thereby securing them cheaper. The expense of this one board would be cheaper than the expense of three.

This plan would not only prevent this unnecessary rivalry and especial effort on the part of each institution to obtain larger appropriations from the General Assembly in order that each might excel the other, but would enable the board to ask for only such appropriations as would be actually necessary to run all institutions economically under one system. It would also be greatly to the benefit of the State, in that it would have the effect to cause the boards to be independent of all local influences, or the influence of any officer of any one institution. It would effectively abolish the rivalry between the white institutions, and in dissipating the sentiment that one is better than the other.

We cannot close this report without expressing to your Excellency our grateful appreciation for your invaluable assistance and advice in helping us to perform the responsible duties we have had before us. At all times you have been ready to aid

us in the difficult tasks of this great and important work, and it has been extremely gratifying that we have had not only your advice and assistance, but your sympathy and approval of what we are trying to do.

Respectfully submitted,

CHAS. A. WEBB, *Chairman,*
J. W. MCNEILL, *Secretary,*
J. H. WEDDINGTON,
E. F. AYDLETT,
W. A. ERWIN.

EXHIBIT A.

RALEIGH APPROPRIATION.

1907.		
July 9.	Storeroom	$ 4,200.00
	Carpenter shop	3,800.00
	Annex for 100 men	48,265.00
	Grimes land, 1,136 acres	53,500.00
	Barrett & Thomson	3,593.97
1908.		
Feb. 14.	B. McKenzie, heating	8,764.00
	Young & Hughes, plumbing	3,725.00
	J. M. Johnson, sewer pipe	1,146.50
	Removal of old sewers	85.00
	Additional to complete storeroom	1,685.25
Oct. 7.	One building for women	21,900.00
	Group of three buildings	14,813.00
	Group of three buildings	14,813.00
	Group of three buildings	14,813.00
	Sewer pipe connection with A. and M. College	500.00
	Total	$195,603.72
	Amount paid for furniture	2,847.04
	Total	$198,450.76
	Advertising, Manufacturers' Record	5.00
	Total	$198,455.76

EXHIBIT B.

MORGANTON APPROPRIATION.

1907.		
May 10.	Shuping and Woodard land	$ 1,500.00
	Wagner land	3,500.00
	Addition to laundry	600.00
	Tenement houses	4,800.00
	Repairing Brittain house	350.00
1908.		
Mch. 31.	Nurses' home	16,820.00
	Heating plant for nurses' home	2,400.00
	Plumbing for nurses' home	1,431.00
Aug. 7.	Repairing old laundry	269.00
	Advertising for bids, Charlotte Observer	11.76
	Advertising for bids, Raleigh Observer	11.55
	Avery & Ervin, attorneys	25.00
	Barrett & Thomson, Architects	722.78
	Colony buildings for men	30,000.00
	Total	$ 62,441.09

EXHIBIT C.

GOLDSBORO APPROPRIATION.

1907.		
May 10.	New engine	$ 2,125.00
	Fire protection	771.00
	New boiler, 200 horse power	1,172.00
	Filter	3,000.00
	Pipe line	700.00
	Two pumps	1,250.00
	Surface closets	150.00
	Smith land, 216 acres	6,000.00
	Plumbing	280.00
	Bath tubs	275.00
	Pipes and fittings	200.00
	Cement floors	225.00
	Dynamo and foundations and settings	2,480.37
Aug. 7.	Two tenement houses	500.00
	Additional for fence	100.00
	Extra amount allowed on boiler	581.43
	For removal of old houses	150.00
	Barrett & Thomson, plans, etc	413.87
	Additional allowed on repairs, etc	951.52
Oct. 7.	Appropriation for four buildings	23,650.00
25.	Additional cost of furnishing	1,233.42
	Freight and setting boiler	581.43
1908.		
Jan. 2.	Mules	1,200.00
	Wagon and cart	145.00
	Wire fencing	364.00
	Stables and shelter	350.00
	Repairs ice plant and cold-storage room	264.00
	Rubbers for exchange	20.00
	Heaters, hot water	505.00
	Turning lathes	300.00
	Pump foundation and duplex	100.00
	Total	$ 49,034.74